

October 7, 2015

The regular meeting of the New Richmond Utility Commission was held on October 7, 2015 at 7:30 a.m. at the Civic Center.

Jerry Frey called the meeting to order at 7:30 a.m.

Members Present: Jerry Frey, Bob Mullen, Dan Casey, and Pat Becker.

Members Absent: Gerry Warner

A motion was made by Pat Becker to approve the agenda, seconded by Dan Casey, and carried.

A motion was made by Bob Mullen to approve the minutes of the September 2, 2015 meeting, approve bills, and disbursements, seconded by Pat Becker, and carried.

Public Comment – None

Solar Garden – Project Agreement Approval – The PSC issued their final orders approving our Community Solar Garden Tariff on September 24, 2015. The PSC required WPPI to revise the tariff to calculate the credits to subscribing customers using actual avoided costs subject to periodic review and adjustment. The revised changes were sent to the city attorney for review and approved. The Solar Garden ground breaking is to take place on Monday, October 12, 2015 at 4:00 p.m. The marketing outreach to customers will begin at that time. A motion was made by Pat Becker to approve the project agreement, seconded by Dan Casey, and carried.

Shared Savings Loan – Domain Inc. – Domain, Inc has submitted an application for Focus on Energy and WPPI Energy RFP for Energy Efficiency funding for compressed air and lighting energy efficiency measures. For the cost of the projects not covered by incentives, they are pursuing a shared savings loan through the utilities. The Shared Savings program utilizes WPPI Energy funding to provide loans for customers pursuing energy efficiency measures. The loan is a 60-month term at 2%. WPPI Energy and New Richmond Utilities will share in the default risk. WPPI Energy performs a financial review of the customer to provide findings on a scale of 1-5. A score of 3+ shows no negative trends and is considered a favorable score. Staff is requesting Utility Commission authorization to enter into a Shared Savings agreement with Domain, Inc for an amount not to exceed \$50,000, pending the financial review is returned with a favorable score of 3 or greater. A motion was made by Bob Mullen to go forward with the Shared Savings Loan with Domain, Inc., for up to \$50,000.00, contingent on Domain's financial review having a score of 3 or greater, seconded by Dan Casey, and carried.

Water/Wastewater GIS (Geographic Information System) Update – Andrew Lamers, Community Development IT & GIS Analyst & Nick O'Brien, Limited Term GIS Technician, have been working this past summer to update the Water/Wastewater GIS. Andrew gave a short presentation on the information stored in the GIS, along with the benefits it provides to the Utility.

Department Reports:

Bob Meyer, Water Superintendent:

Bob extended a thank you to the Board for their support in implementing the cross connection procedures. The installation of new meters and cross connection inspections is ongoing. Water Department has finished televising 33,000 feet of sewer mains on the North Side. Jetting continues, as well as a large amount of locates. Jon Evans will begin flushing hydrants on Monday, and is also involved with water inspections for the Health Center. Grant Way is under construction. The Water Department will be involved with inspections at the Good Will site. The valve exercising to clean and maintain valves has been completed.

Steve Skinner, Lead Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator:

Jeremiah Wendt gave a brief update for Steve Skinner. Steve was attending the WWOA Conference in Wisconsin Dells. There were some wiring issues on the final clarifiers that will be repaired by a local electrician. The UV disinfection has been completed. The final clarifiers will be drained and cleaned in preparation for winter. Dave Pufall has been on vacation. Greg Hermansen, along with other staff members from the Water Department were helping out as needed.

Tom Rickard, Electric Superintendent:

Tom Rickard was absent.

Jeremiah Wendt, Director of Public Works:

Jeremiah has spent a lot of time on the street and utility projects. Construction of Grant Way is currently in progress. Roosevelt Drive will be starting later in the week. Projects on 175th Street, 115th Street, and High Street are underway. High Street is almost ready for paving. Work has just started on 175th Street and 115th Street. They have begun stripping off millings, and have started some storm sewer work. Currently working on the 2016 Budget. The final interviews for the Operations Manager position will take place later this week. This position will be funded through the City.

Nancy Petersen, Finance Director:

MEUW Accounting and Customer Service Seminar – Diane and I attended MEUW's Accounting and Customer Service Seminar on September 23 in the Dells. Topics included the State's SDC program (State Debt Collection), some PSC reporting changes, an update of Act 274, and the changes as it pertains to this year's tax roll process.

Lien Processing (Tax Roll) – 2015 – We are preparing to mail tax roll letters on October 15 to property owners, and this year, tenants (due to Act 274), who have a past due utility balances as of September 30. With our >60 days past due A/R being consistently at 1% since the beginning of the year, and our practices of disconnecting throughout the year, we are hopeful that this year's tax roll will be at last year's level, if not lower.

Collecting Unpaid Utility Bills – Towns of Richmond and Star Prairie – Both boards of the Town of Star Prairie and Richmond meet, October 6 and October 8, respectively. We hope that the towns will approve the adoption of a Resolution Authorizing the Town of Richmond and Star Prairie to Impose a Special Charge under Wis. Stats. §66.0809. An Agreement for Assessment between the Towns and the City was also drafted by Nick Vivian which also be included on the Council's agenda on October 12. We will then be able to utilize the same tax roll process as we do in the City limits of New Richmond.

2015 Northstar User Conference – Debbie Powers will be leaving on October 20 to attend the 2015 Annual Northstar User Conference to be held on October 21-23rd in Atlanta, GA. This is a full scholarship to attend the conference paid by WPPI.

Baker Tilly Utility University – Nancy will be attending Baker Tilly's Utility University on October 20. Topics include: governmental accounting update, succession planning, IT security, community solar, communicating with your governing body, cash reserve policy and the Wisconsin Public Service Commission Annual Report.

2016 Budgeting - We are working on the 2016 budgets and will have drafts to present at the November Utility Commission meeting.

WPPI Contract Extension – Mike Peters and other staff from WPPI will present to the City Council on October 12 at 7 p.m. We invite Utility Commissioners to attend as WPPI presents information on extending our contract with WPPI through 2050 (the current contract goes through 2037). New Richmond Utility staff will be compiling the pros and cons to present to the Utility Commission in November or December for a final decision to be made by the end of this year.

October 12 at 4 p.m. – Community Solar Garden Groundbreaking Ceremony and Event – The groundbreaking for our Community Solar Garden will be held on Monday, October 12 at 4 p.m. at the site. We are working on getting as many people and businesses there as possible for this exciting and historical event and hope also that all of the Utility Commissioners will be present as well. We are planning to have music, light refreshments, a ceremony and sign ups to purchase panels. Following the event 45th Parallel and Barley John's Brewery will be conducting tours and tastings.

Weston Arndt, WPPI Energy Services Rep:

Energy Services Work

- Given some recent decorative street light failures, we are evaluating potential retrofit or lamp replacement options. We currently are testing 4 products.
- Westfields Hospital was approved for a study grant from WPPI Energy to evaluate their existing and future cooling needs and analyze the energy impacts of their options.
- Work continues at the Phillips-Medisize expansion, LED lighting is installed, final connection of the chiller is underway. They are still working through delays for the central resin drying and processing system.

Mike Darrow, Utility Manager:

Mike had a meeting with representatives from WPPI on Monday to review the proposed contract extension. An update will be provided in November.

Communications and miscellaneous correspondence – Some discussion took place on when elections for Utility Commission President would take place, as well as the Utility Commission dinner. This is to be discussed during the November 4, 2015 meeting.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Dan Casey to adjourn, seconded by Pat Becker, and carried. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 a.m.